

**Amendments to the Claims**

Claims 1-26 (Cancelled).

27. (Previously presented) A gate stack, comprising:  
a gate oxide layer over a semiconductive substrate;  
a polysilicon layer on the gate oxide layer;  
a metal silicide layer on the polysilicon layer;  
a layer comprising  $\text{Si}_x\text{N}_y\text{O}_z\text{:H}$  formed over and in physical contact with the metal silicide, wherein x is from 0.39 to 0.65, y is from 0.02 to 0.56, and z is from 0.05 to 0.33; the metal silicide being the product of a process in which the metal silicide is subjected to an anneal treatment after the layer comprising  $\text{Si}_x\text{N}_y\text{O}_z\text{:H}$  is formed; and  
a silicon nitride layer on the layer comprising  $\text{Si}_x\text{N}_y\text{O}_z\text{:H}$ , the polysilicon layer, the gate oxide layer, the metal silicide layer, the layer comprising  $\text{Si}_x\text{N}_y\text{O}_z\text{:H}$ , and the silicon nitride layer being patterned to form the gate stack.

Claims 28-32 (Cancelled).

33. (Previously presented) The gate stack of Claim 27, where the layer comprising  $\text{Si}_x\text{N}_y\text{O}_z\text{:H}$  has a thickness of from about 250Å to about 650Å.

Claims 34-35 (Cancelled).

36. (Previously presented) The gate stack of claim 27 wherein y is from 0.02 to less than 0.1.

37. (Previously presented) The gate stack of claim 27 wherein  $x=0.5$ ,  $y=0.37$  and  $z=0.13$ .

38. (Previously presented) The gate stack of claim 27 wherein the metal silicide layer comprises titanium.

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Claims 39-43. (Cancelled)